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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON S. CORZINE, a Senator from the State of New Jersey.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer: William James gives us a thought for today and a call to prayer:

We and God have business with each other. And in opening ourselves to His influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled. The universe, at those parts of it which our personal being constitutes, takes a turn genuinely for the worse or better in proportion as each one of us fulfills or evades God's demands.

Gracious God, we open ourselves to the influence of Your Spirit. Think Your thoughts through our minds; express Your love through our emotions; accomplish Your plans through our wills. We invite You to take control of our lives and use us today. Bless the Senators with an awareness of Your presence, an assurance of Your help, and an accountability to You for the work of this day. Help us all to fulfill our destiny as Your faithful servants today. Thank You for the privilege! You are our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON S. CORZINE led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD.)

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2002.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JON S. CORZINE, a Senator from the State of New Jersey, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CORZINE thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the first half of the time shall be under the control of the Republican leader or his designee.

Under the previous order, the second half of the time shall be under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

In my capacity as a Senator from the State of New Jersey, I suggest the absence of a quorum. Without objection, the time for the quorum call will be evenly divided.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEETING THE SENATE CHALLENGES

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, let me take a couple of minutes to speak on a couple of subjects which I feel very strongly about and that we are facing.

First of all, I want to talk about energy. Certainly, during this whole year we have been giving consideration to and having some emphasis on energy. The public interest has been higher, and we have problems. When gas prices are higher, everybody recognizes the issue that we have with energy. But when those settle down a little, the problem is still there. We in the Congress have tried to deal with it for this whole year. Now we are in the process of having a conference committee try to come out with conclusions. I just wanted to urge that we move forward with the conference committee and that we finally come up with an energy policy in this country. We do not have one.

We find ourselves in the position of being nearly 60 percent dependent on importation of oil in order to meet our needs. We don't want to be in that position, particularly with the unrest in the Middle East from where much of our oil comes. We certainly need to find solutions that will make us less dependent. It is not only an energy issue, it affects our economy. I do not know of anything that affects our economy more than energy. We use energy when we turn on our lights, when we have heat, and when we have air-conditioning.

In terms of the economy itself, nothing is more important than energy.

I am hopeful that we can move forward. We have put together a conference committee. The House bill is somewhat less extensive than the Senate bill. On the other hand, certainly there are a great many things in which there is common interests. Someone reviewed it and found that there are probably 55 issues in which we have a common interest.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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